

Background

Pursuant to Section 359(d) of the National Highway System Designation Act of 1995 (NHS Designation Act), (Public Law 104-59), the Secretary of Transportation will conduct a study to evaluate the near-term applications of magnetic levitation ground transportation technology in the United States, with particular emphasis in identifying projects which would warrant immediate application of such technology.

The study will also evaluate the use of innovative financing techniques for the construction and operation of such projects. The actual study will be conducted by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) within the Department of Transportation (DOT). The NHS Designation Act provides that the study be undertaken in consultation with an advisory committee, which will serve as advisor to DOT on the conduct of the study and on the drafting of study documents prepared by DOT staff. This committee, the Maglev Study Advisory Committee, has been established. As provided for in the NHS Designation Act, it consists of 8 people representing differing disciplines and interests relative to high speed ground transportation, who were chosen by the Secretary for their backgrounds in magnetic levitation transportation, design and construction, public and private finance, and infrastructure policy disciplines.

It is the purpose of this notification to announce the date and place of the first (organizational) meeting of this Committee. At this meeting Federal Railroad Administrator, Jolene Molitoris will address the Committee, and FRA staff members and consultants will provide background for the study, including relevant prior studies performed at FRA and elsewhere, and a discussion of the state of maglev technology and its applications. The Committee may also elect a chair and discuss its involvement in the study. Adjournment is expected prior to 5:00 pm. Members of the public are entitled and encouraged to attend the meeting as observers.

Issued in Washington, D.C. on December 20, 1996.

Donald M. Itzkoff,

Deputy Administrator.

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Maritime Administration

[Docket No. M-O25]

Request for Public Comment on the Causes of Diversion of Cargo From U.S. East Coast Ports

AGENCY: Maritime Administration, United States Department of Transportation.

ACTION: Notification of public outreach meeting.

SUMMARY: On July 24, 1996, as part of a plan to help sustain long-term growth of the Port of New York/New Jersey, the Department of Transportation announced its intention to study the causes of cargo diversion from U.S. East Coast ports (i.e., the transshipment of U.S. waterborne imports and exports through nearby foreign ports) and to recommend any additional measures that are needed to enhance the international competitiveness of our East Coast ports. An announcement of the information collection phase of this study appeared as a notice in the Federal Register on November 12, 1996, with comments requested by December 27, 1996.

Information was requested on the impact of the following domestic and foreign factors affecting the diversion of cargo from U.S. East Coast ports: shipper and carrier routing preferences; shifting international trade patterns; constraints on the U.S. transportation infrastructure; federal, state and local laws and regulations; port charges and other transportation-related fees; "Global Alliances" of ocean carriers and their impact on port calls and port rotations; landside and waterside interface problems and intermodal factors; aggressive port marketing initiatives; direct and indirect subsidies for port and intermodal infrastructure; and any other factors that impact on the flow of cargo through U.S. East Coast ports. Data on the volume, value and composition of diverted cargo, as well as any other information related to the subject, was also sought. The Department also solicited comments on measures that are needed to enhance the international competitiveness of our East Coast ports through the 21st Century.

A public outreach meeting will be held in Washington, D.C. on Thursday, January 9, 1997, in Room 9230-34 of the Department of Transportation Nassif Building (400 7th Street, SW) from 10:00 AM until noon. Anyone wishing to address the meeting on the above topics or related matters should contact the Maritime Administration in advance, and provide four copies of

their statements prior to the outreach meeting, if possible.

Participants are urged to express their views on the relative significance of the various factors affecting cargo diversion. Specific examples of cargo diversion and submission of relevant data are encouraged, as well as any views on measures that the Department might undertake to improve the international competitiveness of U.S. East Coast ports.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Bruce J. Carlton, Associate Administrator for Policy, International Trade and Marketing (202) 418-8144.

By Order of the Maritime Administrator.

Dated: December 20, 1996.

Joel C. Richard,

Secretary, Maritime Administration.

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Research and Special Programs Administration

Office of Hazardous Materials Safety; Notice of Applications for Modification of Exemptions or Applications To Become a Party to an Exemption

AGENCY: Research and Special Programs Administration, DOT.

ACTION: List of applications for modification of exemptions or applications to become a party to an exemption.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the procedures governing the application for, and the processing of, exemptions from the Department of Transportation's Hazardous Materials Regulations (49 CFR Part 107, Subpart B), notice is hereby given that the Office of Hazardous Materials Safety has received the applications described herein. This notice is abbreviated to expedite docketing and public notice. Because the sections affected modes of transportation, and the nature of application have been shown in earlier Federal Register publications, they are not repeated here. Requests for modifications of exemptions (e.g. to provide for additional hazardous materials, packaging design changes, additional mode of transportation, etc.) are described in footnotes to the application number. Application numbers with the suffix "M" denote a modification request. Application numbers with the suffix "P" denote a party to request. These applications have been separated from the new applications for exemptions to facilitate processing.